

SENATE RESOLUTION 7015 of the First Extraordinary Session

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the University of Tennessee "Pride of the Southland" Marching Band on the occasion of its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this legislative body to recognize those distinctly Tennessee institutions that are at once nationally revered and serve as a cultural touchstone and point of pride for the State; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee (UT) marching band, aptly christened the Pride of the Southland Marching Band, celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, an extraordinary milestone in the history of this remarkable organization; and

WHEREAS, the Pride of the Southland Marching Band was founded in 1869 as part of the Military Department; initially an all-cornet ensemble, the marching band featured a drum major and was directed by a student cadet leader; and

WHEREAS, in 1871, the university appointed its first professor of music, Gustav Robert Knabe, who was a graduate of Leipzig Conservatorium in Germany, a school founded by renowned composer Felix Mendelssohn; with this illustrious pedigree in place, the marching band took shape, at first exhibiting a military style in both uniform and music, an aesthetic that endured until 1951; and

WHEREAS, in 1892, the band was reorganized, and Ernest H. Garratt, an experienced musician who served as UT's organist and Glee Club director, was named the first official bandmaster; and

WHEREAS, in 1899, Gustav Knabe's son, William A. Knabe, assumed leadership of the band, holding the position of bandmaster until his death in 1914; under his leadership, the band

made its first appearance at a football game, a contest between UT and Sewanee, in which UT prevailed 6-0; and

WHEREAS, the Pride of the Southland's third bandmaster was William Crouch, who took the helm in 1917; under Mr. Crouch's direction, the band doubled in size to thirty members, wore surplus World War I uniforms, and routinely played at football games; some members marched in the band in addition to playing on the football team; and

WHEREAS, the fourth bandmaster, Ernest Hall, joined the program in 1925 and ushered in several changes; the band added a female drill team, the Volettes; introduced a new fight song, "Fight, Vols, Fight!"; and, in 1939, inducted the first female musicians, Martha Carrol and Peggy Calloway on the lyre and Marjorie Abbott on the marimba; and

WHEREAS, in 1941, Walter Ryba became UT's fifth bandmaster; a former French hornist with the famed John Philip Sousa Band, Mr. Ryba directed the band for two decades, during which time the band increased its enrollment and introduced themed halftime shows with guest artists; the *Knoxville Journal* sports editor Ed Harris, in his November 1, 1949, column, "Top o' the Morning," dubbed the band the "Pride of the Southland"; and

WHEREAS, between 1949 and 1959, the marching band was again an all-male preserve; in 1960, after ninety-one years as a component of the ROTC program, the band was moved administratively into the Department of Music Education and then the Office of the Chancellor; and

WHEREAS, with the band's administrative reassignment and Mr. Ryba's retirement in 1960, the Pride of the Southland ushered in a new era; for the next three decades, the band was under the director of the sixth bandmaster and director of bands, Dr. W.J. Julian; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Julian's leadership, some of the most famous Pride traditions were established, such as the Circle Drill, running through the "T," and playing "Rocky Top"; the uniform style currently in use was also instated at that time, complete with white plume on an orange and white shako. Dr. Julian served as director until 1993, for a total of thirty-two years, by far the longest tenure of any director before or since; and

WHEREAS, the W.J. Julian Professorship of Bands, the first endowed professorship in the history of the UT School of Music, was established in 2010 in honor of the legendary band director; Gary Sousa, who was UT's bandmaster from 1997 to 2013, was the first recipient of the professorship; and

WHEREAS, management of the band returned to the School of Music in July 2013, the same month that the school moved into the new Natalie L. Haslam Music Center; that same year, Donald Ryder, conductor of UT's Symphonic Band, was made interim director of bands, becoming permanent director and the tenth bandleader in 2015; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Ryder's leadership, the band started a new tradition with the football team, the Circle of Life, as part of the team's warm-up on the field; in 2019, band membership totaled more than 350 members; and

WHEREAS, milestone achievements in the band's history include opening the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville; performing in fourteen Presidential Inaugurations, the first being for President Dwight Eisenhower in 1953 and the most recent being for President Donald Trump in 2017; and performing in fifty Bowl games, the first of which was the Orange Bowl on January 2, 1939, and including venerable competitions such as the Rose Bowl, Sugar Bowl, and Cotton Bowl; and

WHEREAS, there are few other traditions in the University of Tennessee's history that can match the success of the Pride of the Southland Marching Band; it is most fitting that the band be honored during this, its sesquicentennial, year; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we recognize and commend the University of Tennessee Pride of the Southland Marching Band upon the occasion of its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, extending our best wishes for continued success in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.